



South Mountain Corridor Study

Citizens Advisory Team

DRAFT Meeting Summary

Date: February 23, 2006
Time: 5:30 p.m.
Location: District 6 Komatke Center, Learning Center Meeting Hall

CAT Members Attending:

Rock Argabright, Ahwatukee Foothills Chamber of Commerce
 Kris Black, Ahwatukee Foothills HOA
 Steve Boschen, Valley Forward
 Jim Buster, Avondale
 Clayton Danzeisen, Maricopa County Farm Bureau
 Peggy Eastburn, Estrella Village Planning Committee
 Doris French, Laveen Village Planning Committee
 Michael Goodman, Phoenix Mountains Preservation Council
 Don Jones, Southwest Valley Chamber of Commerce

David Lafferty, Tolleson
 Bob Moss, United Dairymen of Arizona
 Patrick Panetta, Ahwatukee Foothills Village Planning Committee (for Laurel Arndt)
 Nathaniel Percharo, I-10 Pecos Landowners
 Laurie Prendergast, Laveen Citizens for Responsible Development
 Michelle Pulich-Stewart, Sierra Club
 John D. Rodriguez, Lakewood HOA
 Jim Strogon, Kyrene de los Lagos Elementary School
 Dave Williams, Knight Transportation/AMTA

Staff and Consultants:

Jack Allen, HDR
 Kathy Arthur, MAG
 Lindy Bauer, MAG
 Matt Burdick, ADOT
 Mike Bruder, ADOT
 Kelly Cairo, GCI

Ken Davis, FHWA
 Amy Edwards, HDR
 Ralph Ellis, ADOT
 Fred Garcia, ADOT
 Theresa Gunn, GCI
 Bob Hazlett, MAG
 Dean Howard, PDG

Dan Lance, ADOT
 Dave Pekara, VSI
 Ben Spargo, HDR
 Roger Roy, MAG
 Steve Thomas, FHWA
 Doug Torres, GRICDOT
 Bill Vachon, FHWA

Citizens:

Norm Dahle
 Stephanie Farrington
 Jason Farrington
 Jon Findley

Jim Joquim
 Doug Murphy
 Melanie Pai
 Lisa Percharo

Corinne Purtill
 William Ramsay
 Dave Swisher
 Curt Upton

Action Plan

Task/Activity	Who	When
Provide a map showing locations of monitoring stations.	MAG	Upcoming meeting

Welcome

Theresa Gunn welcomed attendees and encouraged members of the public to review the Citizen Advisory Team handout, which includes a question and comment form on the back. She explained that due to technical issues, the Air Quality Technical Report summary review would occur later in the agenda than shown.

CAT Member Questions and Comments:

Comment: I am concerned about a recent Arizona Republic article, which does not show a byline. It says that the CAT meets “periodically,” which is an understatement. It also says that ADOT designed

this “questionable process” regarding CAT. This is not true, because the CAT members designed our processes. **Response:** This is your meeting, and you should call for change at any time you believe procedures should be changed.

Question: What is happening with Trailside HOA? **Response:** ADOT has offered to make a presentation to the Trailside group.

Michelle Pulich-Stewart announced her resignation from the CAT. She said that the Sierra Club could no longer participate in the CAT due to the recent change in the method for accepting public comments.

Comment: It seems that we should seek out another representative similar to the Sierra Club when we begin to work on east side issues.

Comment: The Sierra Club had a place at the table, and has now given up that place.

Following discussion, Gunn asked the CAT if it was their consensus to add an environmental voice after the west side evaluation. The group agreed with the following requests: the study team should research which groups might be contacted; Pulich-Stewart should be contacted for a suggestion; and Pulich-Stewart should be considered as an individual who could join the CAT.

John Rodriguez apologized to the CAT for sending out all committee members’ contact information to the media.

Project Update

Amy Edwards addressed questions posed at the previous CAT meeting.

Question: Is there a required release rate (flow, gpm) over area when directing rainwater, runoff to lower area? If there is, what is this rate and what engineering principles are used to control this rate.

Response: A project is not allowed to cause adverse impacts with improvements and must maintain existing flows.

Question: Check on the area near 59th Avenue and Baseline regarding Section 4(f) issues. Properties appear on graphics but not in listings. **Response:** Some properties were studied, but were found to not have 4(f) impacts.

Question: Provide economic totals for each alignment. **Response:** (This information was distributed.)

Question: Review the noise information for the west side alternatives provided to the CAT.

Response: (Edwards directed CAT members to sections of the Noise Report.)

CAT Member Questions and Comments:

Question: What is a “regional system?” **Response:** I believe it is defined by the flood control district, but I will check into this.

Question: What about use of the Laveen conveyance channel? **Response:** Updated drainage design does consider use of the Laveen Area Conveyance Channel per discussions with the Flood Control District.

Question: What has happened with the roadway elevations and going over buildings? **Response:** Cost is a factor in elevating a freeway over a building. An elevated segment is not practical in all cases. At this point in the study we should assume areas are not elevated.

Question: What about the change of only four employees in the economic report? **Response:** We are still reviewing this information and will update the report as new information comes in. We begin with database information and add specifics as they are discovered.

Question: In Table D, what is land use based on? **Response:** This is based on information found in the general plan, which doesn't necessarily delve into specifics.

Edwards also noted that the study team has followed up with SRP regarding the substation discussed previously. This substation is outside of the alignment. Any of SRP's plans for future growth that are available would be part of the utility report.

Gunn pointed out that there is a misperception that W51 means an alignment along 51st Avenue. This is inaccurate. The alignment is named for the point at which it would connect to I-10. The actual route currently is in the area between 55th Avenue and 61st Avenue.

Local Access Update

Edwards reviewed drafts of graphics to be used at the upcoming local access meetings. These detailed maps show what could change along I-10 for any of the South Mountain Freeway alternatives.

CAT Member Questions and Comments:

Comment: The colors are confusing.

Comment: I would like to see what is behind the lines – not just white area.

Question: Has the Van Buren off-ramp been eliminated? **Response:** No.

Comment: It looks like the green line is a route over the freeway.

Comment: The graphic needs to show more information south of Van Buren.

Comment: The Massey Tank Farm leases out to employers of approximately 400 employees – who are not included in the counts.

Minor Alignment Changes

Edwards explained that W71 must shift. This is because a school no longer plans to fence and gate its yard, which means that it is now eligible for 4(f) protection. Coordination is on-going with the City of Phoenix regarding details of the shifted alignment, in particular the interchange at Baseline Road.

At the W55/Van Buren area, the study team is looking at options to maintain access at Van Buren, and to stay off of the jet fuel facility property. One option proposed by the City of Phoenix includes moving a segment of Van Buren. However, at this time, the interchange would be unsuitable and not meet design standards.

The W101 alignment will be modified to avoid the expansion of the 91st Avenue waste water treatment plant.

Drainage areas are being modified. Some required drainage areas will be reduced in size due to new information, refinements in designs, and the use of the Laveen area conveyance channel.

CAT Member Questions and Comments:

Question: How does Homeland Security factor into the tank farm? **Response:** This is a concern, and ADOT would have to address this issue regarding wall construction and visibility. There are no specific design criteria at this time. Also, the City of Phoenix has requested that a half-diamond interchange remain part of the design.

Ongoing Studies

South Mountain Ridge options are under study, including bridging and tunneling options. More study information will be available and presented at the east side information meetings.

Wildlife crossings remain under review, including looking at proposed drainage crossings, and utilizing oversized culverts or bridges to allow for increased wildlife access.

Other ongoing studies include: HOV direct connections, local access options, W101 partial reconstruction, and Ahwatukee profile.

CAT Member Questions and Comments:

Question: Do the home counts include new development in the Foothills area? **Response:** counts include areas that are platted. **Reply:** We can check to see what is platted.

Question: What are the issues associated with tunneling? **Response:** Issues include fire safety, homeland security and traffic operations issues. Tunneling through the ridges remains an option at this point because people are asking about it. **Reply:** We should explain to the public what the risks are pertaining to various options.

Comment: Noise on an elevated bridge could not be mitigated. **Response:** We are looking at this. Noise walls are constructed on the bridges within the regional freeway system. However, with bridges such as those being studied through South Mountain Park, further research is needed.

Question: Is there a number at which the government says it is too much to spend to spare a section of the park? **Response:** There is no set dollar value; rather, the issue of whether it is a prudent decision is considered.

Comment: I would like to see cooperation from GRIC on obtaining the Borderland Study.

Technical Report Summary Review/Air Quality

Jack Allen introduced Lindy Bauer, MAG, and Dave Pekara, VSI. Bauer reviewed regional air quality information and the role of the Maricopa Association of Governments. Presentation highlights include:

- MAG's primary responsibility is regional air quality planning.
- MAG prepares regional air quality plans for carbon monoxide (CO), ozone, and PM₁₀ (particulate matter pollution of 10 microns or less).
- With vehicle miles traveled (VMT) increasing, it does not necessarily result in increases in pollution or exceedences of federal standards.

CAT Member Questions and Comments:

Question: Did the gasoline waiver last fall cause violations? **Response:** No.

Question: If CO and ozone levels are decreasing, why do I see darker clouds in Phoenix? **Response:** The brown cloud that you see is PM_{2.5}, which stays aloft. The major source of PM_{2.5} is tailpipe and diesel emissions. We should see improvements soon. Also, CO is invisible.

Comment: This is a false statement. The brown cloud is mostly dust. **Response:** This information comes from our 1999 Brown Cloud Study. **Reply:** EPA information will show that only a small percentage of the brown cloud will be affected by reductions in diesel emissions.

Comment: I am concerned about impacts close to a freeway.

Question: What are the impacts of diesel emissions? Is this different than gasoline? **Response:** There is more information about this that will be included in the second part of the presentation.

Question: Is rubber part of road dust? **Response:** Most dust is just dust, such as construction track-out dust.

Kathy Arthur, MAG, reviewed regional air quality conformity information. Presentation highlights included:

- We are showing lower emissions through 2026 than the federal budget allows for in CO, volatile organic compounds (VOCs), and nitrogen oxides (NO_x).
- More stringent federal emission standards for cars, trucks, and fuels will continue to reduce vehicle exhaust emissions sufficiently to offset the VMT growth anticipated through 2015.
- The implementation of additional federal controls will reduce emissions even further.

CAT Member Questions and Comments:

Question: What do the percentages mean on the chart “2006 regional PM₁₀ emissions reflecting committed control measures?” **Response:** Hopefully, the pie represents both the actual and the annual budget figures.

Question: Where is the monitoring station for PM_{2.5}? **Response:** We are in attainment for PM_{2.5}. A future study will show how much of the particulate matter is PM₁₀ versus PM_{2.5}.

Question: What is the difference between conformity and standard? **Response:** The standard is 150 micrograms per day.

Question: what is the current PM measurement level? **Response:** It is PM₁₀. PM₁₀ is primarily dust by volume. An example would be dirt that lands on the road, and vehicles that then kick up this dust. This does include rubber.

Question: How does PM_{2.5} affect the human body? **Response:** The lungs are affected, and new information shows that the blood stream is affected as well.

Comment: The PM information discussed is very misleading, since it actually makes up just 2.1% of the problem as shown on the MAG table.

Allen presented project-related air quality information. Presentation highlights included:

- CO is modeled for this type of project.
- We will provide a map showing locations of monitoring stations.
- 700 locations were modeled.
- Mobile Source Air Toxics (MSAT) is an up and coming topic.
- FHWA and EPA are working on MSAT issues.
- NEPA guidance will be addressed in the future.
- Interim guidance has just been issued by FHWA, which includes a tiered approach for analysis.
- The project team will use the interim guidance.
- In projects with a higher potential for MSAT effects, data is to be used as a method of comparison. However, it is not meant to be used as a standard or criteria.
- ADOT and FHWA follow EPA guidelines.
- People sometimes think that if you build something, pollution gets worse. However, this is not always the case.

CAT Member Questions and Comments:

Comment: Laveen would like to see air quality numbers for the no-build option at 51st Avenue/Dobbins. We believe noise and pollution are already bad due to traffic congestion at stop signs.

Question: Why do some of the no-build air quality numbers go up and others go down? **Response:** Differences in traffic are anticipated. Many parameters are used to make these predictions. The model incorporates EPA rulemaking, which will affect reductions in emissions. Other assumptions include projects that are in the Regional Transportation Plan such as the I-10 reliever.

Question: How do you compare and measure in areas without traffic currently? **Response:** We look at other area sources and model concentrations to predict what concentrations might be. There will be a list of uncertainties with each prediction.

Question: Do we have a good model, or has science not yet caught up? **Response:** Modeling is not yet sophisticated enough to account for MSATs. It will, however, show up if there will be meaningful differences. This is what NEPA wants us to achieve.

Question: What will happen to a freeway that passes over a sand and gravel operation, regarding problems with reintrained dust particulate matter? **Response:** ADOT is coming out of a weekly sweeping program to a twice-weekly program in higher traffic areas. This includes PM₁₀ clean sweepers. Also, we don't model PM₁₀ at the project level. This occurs at the regional level. CO is modeled at the project level.

Question: What about lead and other metals? **Response:** We have six priority transportation-related MSATs.

Question: Have schools been monitored? **Response:** I don't believe so. However, national studies are looking at this.

Question: Why can't ADOT monitor this for six months? **Response:** I would caution monitoring to get a sense of concentrations because false assumptions may be made about the causes. Additionally, schools are considered part of sensitive concentrations, and are part of the modeling process.

Comment: We have the option to look at concentrations in advance, rather than in a post-freeway situation. **Response:** We are obligated to disclose what items we don't have the science to understand.

Comment: In the Las Vegas case, locations were moved due to freeway proximity. **Response:** Part of that agreement was that it not be considered a precedent-setting issue, but rather to force a hard look at MSATs.

Comment: Where is the healthcare information that should be part of this information. Lead needs to be considered. **Response:** We are in attainment for lead.

Question: Why do you just look at the six areas, and not the other 16? **Response:** We follow EPA guidance. We look at the six primary areas because EPA is the governing body regarding clean air and oversees the Clean Air Act. The other 16 MSATs are not ruled out; rather, this is an issue of science and technology catching up.

Question: Why not model PM_{2.5} at the project level? **Response:** PM_{2.5} is not modeled at the micro-scale, and there are no guidelines as to how one might do this.

Question: No matter what the model, the issue is: A proximity of 8-160 yards is a problem for a school. Let Arizona make a standard. **Response:** These items wouldn't be modeled if they weren't considered important. Also, in the absence of a federal standard, the state can't make standards.

Question: How does the draft EIS address this issue? **Response:** We are very concerned about this issue and have asked national experts to come out to address these issues with us. EPA has committed to another rulemaking directed toward MSATs on February 28. It is important to note that we are considering how MSATs will be addressed in the EIS, not whether they will be included.

Question: Is there a solution to the PM₁₀/PM_{2.5} problem, freeway or not? **Response:** Reductions from tailpipes are anticipated.

Question: If tailpipes are already cleaner, how can this be a very great percentage? **Response:** We haven't seen the positive effects from diesel reductions yet.

Gunn reminded the CAT that they could choose to use MSAT information as part of their evaluation standards. She also noted that the project team attempted to cover all of the public air quality questions in this presentation and invited the CAT to raise any outstanding issues.

SMCAT Evaluation Process

Gunn explained that due to time constraints, this item would be addressed at the next CAT meeting.

Written Comments/Questions Submitted by the Public:

Comments and questions received during the meeting are recorded here verbatim from forms received.

Melanie Pai, PARC Protecting Arizona's Resources & Children, www.protectazchildren.org

1. What involvement has the Arizona department of public health had to this process?
2. What year was the ADEQ permit to build issued? The permit addresses health concerns and other factors which should be considered prior to permitting and building of the freeway. If MSAT research shows new concerns, should the permit be re-evaluated?

David Fultz, Concerned Families Along South Mountain Loop 202

1. What percent of funding for the cost then west side of South Mountain Loop 202 will be Federal? State and ½ cent sales tax. If there is a difference in the funding from each of the above-mentioned sources from East to West, please state the separate totals.
2. Please show on a map the channels that will be used when releasing rainwater along the entire length of South Mountain Loop 202. Include average annual rainfall, rain storms occurring in short period of time i.e. 4 hours during the summer and fall. Also include the effects from 100-year rainfall, i.e. worst individual rainfall in a 100 year time frame. Please include flow rates total accumulation and show where this occurs on the above-mentioned map. Please include this information in the South Mountain Loop EIS.
3. Is PM_{2.5} also required to be tracked for the South Mountain Loop 202 EIS? If so, where are the reading and statistics for PM_{2.5}? Is most of the particulate in PM_{2.5} in the Phoenix area from vehicle exhaust?
4. If no build option is selected, could some of the funding (non sales tax \$ Maricopa) be diverted to other ADOT projects in SE and Northern Maricopa, Pinal and Yavapai Counties? Would this also bring the schedules in so the above-mentioned highways and transportation projects could be built sooner than some of the projected dates of 2025-2030?
5. Why is PM₁₀ so harmful to humans? What organs get the most exposure to PM₁₀?
6. Why is PM_{2.5} so harmful to humans? What are some of the harmful effects to human tissue and health (longterm) from exposure to PM 2.5? What organs get the most exposure to PM_{2.5}?

7. Aren't the EPA model's ADOT and HDR Engineering are using showing potential projected incorrect in this instance. I mention this because South Mountain Loop 202 has the potential to serve as a commercial bypass around Phoenix. If this is the case, wouldn't a higher degree of particulate be in the air within a 3 mile ribbon along this highway?
8. A real injustice was done when PM_{2.5} wasn't discussed including pie charts and graphics during the 2/23/06 SMCAT Meeting. Examining only PM₁₀ and then pointing out that only 2.1% was due to on road vehicle exhaust improperly showed greater Phoenix air issues. Please cover PM_{2.5} as thoroughly as you did PM₁₀ as to inform the populace to reduce the above-mentioned level of pollutants to live a healthy and full life.
9. If the smaller particles (less than 1 micron) are the most dangerous to your health, why not show the levels/measurements that reside in our air? What are the ill effects on human health when exposed to particles from vehicle exhaust less than 1 micron in diameter?

CAT Member Comment Cards

Statements shown below are recorded verbatim from comment cards.

- Table D – Econ. what are the details of future use conditions W55 and E1?
- What defines “regional system?”
- Local access. Maybe before/after diagrams in close proximity to each other would help.
- Are the homes at the far west end of Pecos included in the house count for E1?
- Why is W55 future land use tax impacts so large if land use has been planned as if there was a W55 freeway alignment?
- Why no “Brown Cloud” study since 1999? Cloud has gotten worse!
- Components of brown cloud.
- Are there PM_{2.5} monitors/data? Aloft? Feasible?
- Need to see a pie chart for PM_{2.5} emissions.
- Get measurements of air quality at 202 & 51.
- Lindy Bauer stated that 60% of Brown Cloud is from tailpipes, mostly from diesel trucks. That is bad info!! The greatest contributor by far is dust!
- MAG makes it sound like – due to exhaust reductions, there are huge reductions in PM₁₀. False! They are only referring to 2.1 % of the PM₁₀ population. They are misleading the public to believe that vehicle emissions are the culprit!
- 51st/Dobbins. 51st/Baseline. Noise or air quality, build vs. no build.

Adjourn:

The next CAT meeting will be held Thursday, March 2, 2006 at 5:30 p.m. at the Learning Center Meeting Hall, Komatke Center, in District Six.